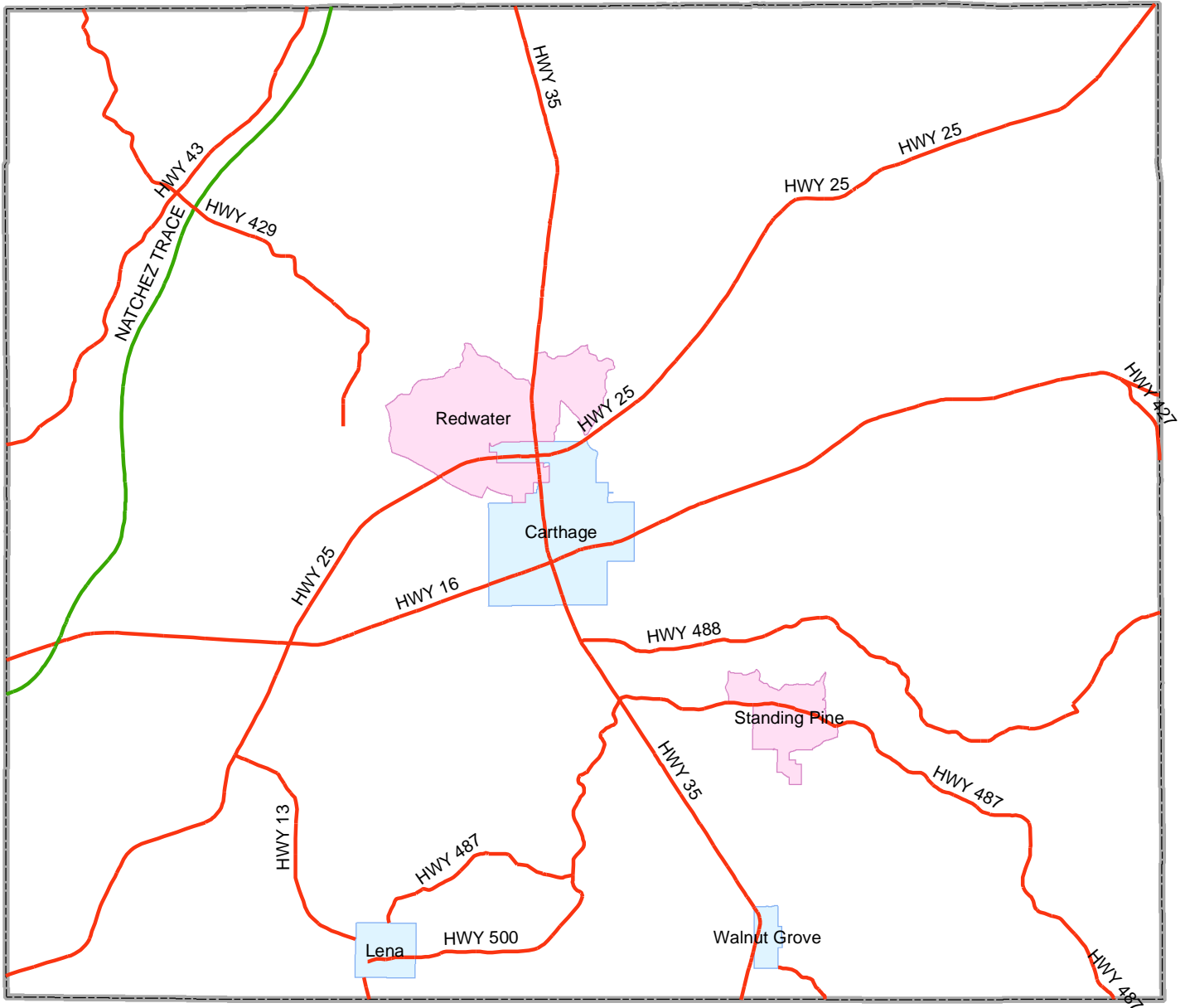


Leake County, Mississippi

County Wildfire Protection Plan



July 2008

Prepared by:
East Central Planning & Development District



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I. Introduction

In 2007 the Mississippi Forestry Commission (MFC), commissioned the preparation of a Wildfire Protection Plan for Leake County. The plan follows the CWPP template outlined in the National Fire Plan Standards and provided by the MFC. Urban Interface and other wildfire hazards are identified, mapped and prioritized and mitigation and treatment options are identified.

The wild land-urban interface (WUI), where structures and other developments merge with undeveloped wild land or vegetative fuels, can create one of the most dangerous and complex situations for firefighters. The wildfire urban interface zone can pose a significant risk to communities in the event of a large-scale wildfire. A County Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) can reduce the potential for loss in the event of a wildfire by identifying priorities for protection of life, property and critical infrastructure within the WUI.

The District staff began gathering geographical data, historical fire information and current fire data. Staff met with the county volunteer fire chiefs and the county Emergency Management Coordinator (EMC) to review the information and obtain input on the strengths and weaknesses of the volunteer fire departments and their ability to fight wildfires. A steering committee was formed which included the fire departments representatives, state and federal agencies and other interested parties.

The plan includes geographic information systems produced maps, a county risk assessment, a mitigation project list, structure ignitability recommendations and an action plan and assessment strategy. It is the intent of the steering committee that this plan will be utilized to guide development and educate landowners as well as to address and then treat at risk wildfire areas within the county.

The plan was developed with an effort to be consistent with the Leake County Hazard Mitigation Plan and the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan.

II. Area Description

Leake County is located in east central Mississippi and consists of 583 square miles of land area. The county has three incorporated communities – Carthage, Lena, and Walnut Grove. The total 2006 estimated population for Leake County is 22,453, an estimated increase of 1,513 persons (7.23%) compared to the 2000 population of 20,940. Of the county’s total population, Carthage (4,724), Lena (167), and Walnut Grove (488), twenty-four percent of the population is located in the incorporated areas of Leake County. High concentrations of population are located in the communities of Edinburg, Madden, Thomastown, and Reformation.

Leake County’s major highway transportation systems include State Highways 35, 16, 25, 429, 487, 488, 492, and 500. The minor arterial roads are County Roads maintained by the local Board of Supervisors, except in the City of Carthage, where the City maintains their own streets. According to county statistics, forty percent (40%) of all county roads are paved, representing approximately 304 miles of roads, while sixty percent (60%) are unpaved, representing approximately 456 miles of roads. Presently, there are no rail services in Leake County.

Leake County has a total of approximately 373,000 acres of land, with forestland representing 280,300 acres. It is estimated 75% of the land in Leake County is forestland. According to public records, the following represents forest ownership, forest acreage, and type of ownership:

Forest Ownership*		
Owner	Acres (Thousands)	Percent
Public	0	0
Forest Industry	98.9	35.3
Private, Non-Industry	181.4	64.7

Forest Acreage*		
Forest Type	Acres (Thousands)	Percent
Pine	103.7	37
Hardwood	56.1	20
Mixed	120.5	43

* *Source: Forest Statistics for Mississippi Counties – 1994, USDA Forest Service.*

Leake County has abundant and rich recreational resources. The county has an abundance of lakes, creeks and woodland that provide excellent fishing, deer and turkey hunting opportunities. The Pearl River flows through Leake County offering boating and fishing. Golden Memorial State Park, located three miles east of Walnut Grove on Highway 492, has many picnic sites, two pavilions, a nature trail, and fishing and boating on a 13-acre lake. The County also has three County-owned parks – located at Ofahoma, near Thomastown in the Galilee community, and near Walnut Grove in the Truelight

community – that include baseball fields, basketball courts, and picnic areas for local residents.

Approximately 18.9 miles of the Natchez Trace Parkway cross western Leake County. Part of the National Park System, this two-lane road closely follows the course of the original Trace, a 440-mile Indian trail stretching from Nashville, Tennessee, to Natchez, Mississippi. Camping, picnic areas, and recreational opportunities abound about along the Trace, including a picnic area at Old Robinson Road and a picnic area and a self-guided walking trail at Myrick Creek that are located in Leake County.

Winters are generally short with few days of intense cold. The mean temperature for January is 57.5 degrees Fahrenheit. Summers are hot with high humidity. The mean temperature during July is degrees. Precipitation tends to be an average of approximately 62 inches of rain per year. The driest and hottest months are July and August, and the wettest month is March. Wind often increases during thunderstorms, which occur frequently and are sometimes accompanied by strong to severe winds, including tornados.

Wildfires have been identified as a hazard due to large areas of pine tree plantations across Leake County. Pine trees cover many large tracks of land in this area and many local residents rely on the timber industry for their livelihoods.

In the four years span covered by the Mississippi Forestry Commission (MFC)'s database, approximately 288 wildfires were reported in Leake County. Most of these fires occurred during the summer and fall months and burned five acres or less. July was the month with the most wildfire activity. Burning debris caused most of the fires. The largest wildfire reported during this period occurred on February 21, 2001, and burned more than 160 acres.

While the National Park Service has primary responsibility for wildfires on the Natchez Trace Parkway, Leake County's volunteer fire departments provide backup for this area as needed. What makes this more difficult is that the Natchez Trace is a controlled access roadway, meaning fire trucks sometimes have to go much farther to respond to a call in this area than they would if access were open.

Wildfires can occur any time of the year, but are more prevalent during the dry, hot summer months. The lack of rain, coupled with temperatures approaching 100 degrees during the middle of the day, turn these wooded areas into tinderboxes. One careless spark from a passing motorist's cigarette or from the lightning associated with strong summer thunderstorms, can cause a fire that damages hundreds of acres and threatens the lives and properties of the residents living in or near these areas. During times of extreme dry weather, local municipalities and the county have often issued "No Burn" orders to prevent local residents from causing a wildfire by letting a small fire get out of hand.

The county has 10 volunteer fire departments: Barnes, Carthage, Edinburg, Lena, Madden, Marydell, Ofahoma, Reformation, Thomastown, and Walnut Grove. Two volunteer fire departments from neighboring Scott County, Ludlow and Sebastopol, also

have response areas in Leake County. Each of the VFD's have a corresponding response area and all have agreements to assist in responding to fires and emergencies within the county and the adjoining counties.

Leake County Volunteer Fire Status				
Fire Rating Area	Sq. Miles	VFD Station	Address	# of Vols
Renfroe	36.5	Barnes	4639 County Line Rd, Carthage MS 39051	17
Carthage	104.3	Carthage	1241 Hwy. 35 N., Carthage, MS 39051	26*
Edinburg	70.7	Edinburg	2657 Hwy. 16 E., Carthage, MS 39051	15
Lena	54.9	Lena	1116 Grand Avenue, Lena, MS 39094	16
Madden	61.5	Madden	1413 Bryan Rd, Walnut Grove, MS 39189	16
Renfroe	26.3	Marydell	201 Loop Road, Carthage, MS 39051	19
Ofahoma	46.6	Ofahoma	2531 Forest Grove Rd., Carthage, MS 39051	9
Renfroe	23.6	Reformation	3800 Reformation Road, Carthage, MS 39051	16
Thomastown	87.5	Thomastown	7480 Hwy. 43, Kosciusko, MS 39090	18
Walnut Grove	42.9	Walnut Grove	21 Depot Street, Walnut Grove, MS 39189	9
Ludlow	18.4	Ludlow**	100 Lee Road, Lena, MS 39094	18
Sebastopol	12.1	Sebastopol**	1032 North Street, Sebastopol, MS 39359	10

* Carthage is both a Volunteer and a City Fire Department with 8 fulltime firefighters not included in this count.

** Stations are physically located in Scott County with response areas in Leake County.

There were approximately 7,437 structures within the county as of 2002 with a mean value of \$54,450 each. Of these structures, approximately 50% are at risk from wildfires. The approximate value of these at-risk structures is \$202,472,325.00.

III. Strategic Goals of the County Wildfire Protection Plan

At the beginning of the planning process, the Leake County CWPP Steering Committee identified several goals. These goals were set to provide a common vision during the process and to identify specific results to be obtained upon completion of the final document.

1. Seek funding for purchase of Brush/Quick Attack Trucks
2. Seek funding for purchase of wildland firefighting equipment, including NFPA-approved wildland PPE, ATV's with water tanks and spray capability, additional fire rakes, flaps, and pumps, and folding portable water tanks.
3. Seek funding to purchase additional communication equipment, including radios.
4. Provide wildland training for volunteer firefighters, including basic wildland firefighting techniques, wildland fire behavior, and wildland survival and safety skills.
5. Develop strategies to recruit additional volunteer firefighters and to retain existing volunteer firefighters
6. Improve transportation system in forest system where possible to improve access to wooded areas
7. Seek funding to remove debris, including Hurricane Katrina-related debris, which can serve as fuel for forest fires
8. Develop an accountability program for fire personnel
9. Seek funding to install additional fireplugs, stand pipes, and dry hydrants in rural areas of the county
10. Seek funding to identify locations of vegetation with high ignitability

IV. Leake County CWPP Maps

Map #1, Fire Response Areas,

This map depicts the locations of the VFD response areas along with the location of the Volunteer Fire Departments. Sebastopol and Ludlow stations are physically located in Scott County but have response areas in Leake County.

Map # 2, Wildfires by Response Area,

This map depicts the locations of wildfires for the FY time period of 2002-2007 as obtained from MFC data.

Map # 3, Arson Fires,

This map depicts the location of arson fires for the FY time period of 2002-2007 as obtained from MFC data.

Map # 4, Fire Data by MFC FY,

This map depicts the locations of all fires color coded by FY for the period 2002-2007.

Map # 5, High Occurrence Wildfire Areas,

This map depicts the areas with a high concentration of wildfires for the FY time period of 2002-2007.

Map # 6, Risk Assessment Ratings,

This map depicts the location of facilities at risk from wildfires, the items are color coded as to their risk from wildfires.

Map # 7, Base Map,

This map depicts the locations of critical facilities and facilities of community importance within the county.

Map # 8, Cogon Grass Locations,

This map depicts the verified locations of Cogon Grass within the county, as provided by the Natural Resource Conservation Service, (NRCS).

Map # 9, Population Density,

This map depicts the areas of population density by census blocks. The information used to develop this map was obtained from the Bureau of the Census, 2000.

V. County Risk Assessment

Through the County Risk Assessment fuel hazards, frequency of wildfire occurrence, vulnerability of development and infrastructure, and emergency preparedness were all considered in compiling the following list of county areas at risk from wildfire.

The Steering Committee attempted to identify large facilities that may be at risk due to their location, function, or potential impact to the community if damaged or lost to wildfire. Once identified, these at-risk areas were prioritized to focus available financial and human resources on specific mitigation projects in the future.

For the purpose of this exercise, these areas were rated from low to high. Areas receiving the highest rating pose an increased risk due to their function, amount of nearby fuel load or their potential to cause significant community impact in the event of damage or loss due to a wildfire. Mitigation projects for the at-risk areas include a wide array of activities. Removal or reduction in fuel load may be suggested for some areas, with a public awareness campaign suggested for others.

Rating Key

- Low
- Medium
- Medium-High
- High

Critical Infrastructure

■ *All Volunteer Fire Departments:* The fire departments strategically located throughout the county are of critical importance, especially in the event of wildfire. However, little risk of fire or smoke at the stations has been identified. All stations are ranked as low.

■ *Emergency Communications Towers:* Near Thomastown at the intersection of Highways 43 and 429, near Lena at the intersection of Grand Avenue (Highway 13) and Lyle Drive, and on Pleasant Hill Road west of Highway 35. There is a good buffer at all of the emergency communication sites listed above. There is nominal smoke or fire risk. The towers are rated low.

■ *Cellular Towers:* Off of Highway 16 on Old Robinson Road, off Highway 43 on Old Pickens Road, off Highway 35 on Allen Road, on Highway 25 near Reformation Road, on Highway 25 between Dickens and Rushing Roads (3 towers), on Highway 16 east of Highway 25, on Highway 16 between Rushing and Stokes Roads, on Highway 16 near Highway 427, on Cedar Grove Road, on Highway 488 near Lacey Road, on Laurel Hill Road near Withers Road, on Midway Road near Highway 25, on Highway 25 near Loop Road, and on Remus Road near Highway 25. There is a good buffer around all the

cellular towers listed above. There is nominal smoke or fire risk. The towers are rated low.

■ *Electric Power Substations*: Highway 16 east of Carthage, Highway 16 west of Carthage, Highway 35 north of Cager Road, and Highway 35 south John Ivy Road. There is a good buffer around all of the electric power substations listed above. There is nominal smoke or fire risk. The substations are rated low.

■ *Water Associations*: On Highway 16 East near Edinburg, on Standing Pine Road near Highway 487, on Loop Road near Highway 25, and on Highway 43 near Thomastown. The water towers located throughout the county were rated low. The structures have a low ignitability potential and are well maintained with good buffers.

Vulnerable Facilities

■ *Tyson Foods*: This major employer for Leake County has a large poultry processing plant north of Carthage on Highway 35. This facility has a slight smoke risk. Because of the size of the building and the amount of ignitable chemicals stored there, there is some risk of fire. This facility is rated medium-high.

Areas of Community Importance

Schools

■ *Edinburg Attendance Center*: The school has a slight smoke risk but no fire risk; therefore, it is rated low.

■ *Leake Academy*: The school has a slight smoke risk but no fire risk; therefore, it is rated low.

■ *South Leake Elementary School*: The school has a slight smoke risk but no fire risk; therefore, it is rated low.

■ *Standing Pine School (Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians)*: The school has a slight smoke risk but no fire risk; therefore, it is rated low.

■ *Thomastown Attendance Center*: The school has a slight smoke risk but no fire risk; therefore, it is rated low.

Recreation

■ *Golden Memorial State Park*: Although this state park is located in a heavily wooded area, the park has only two permanent structures, which are both open-sided picnic pavilions. The park is rated low.

■ *Truelight Park*: Located on Truelight Road north of Walnut Grove. This county-owned park has a good buffer around all its facilities. This park is rated low risk.

■ *Galilee Park*: Located on Beamon Road north of Thomastown. This county-owned park has a good buffer around all its facilities. This park is rated low risk.

■ *Ofahoma Park*: Located at the intersection of Old Robinson and Forest Grove Roads just east of the Natchez Trace Parkway. This county-owned park has a good buffer around all its facilities. This park is rated low risk.

■ *Myrick Creek Rest Stop*: Located on the Natchez Trace Parkway just south of Highway 429. This National Park Service-operated facility has a picnic area and a self-guided walking trail. This recreation area is rated low.

■ *Old Robinson Road Rest Stop*: Located on the Natchez Trace Parkway just north of Highway 16. This National Park Service-operated facility has a picnic area. This recreation area is rated low.

Employment

■ *Hospice in His Hands*: This assisted living facility/rehabilitation center is located in the Madden community. There is a defined buffer around the facility and it is rated low.

■ *Walnut Grove Youth Correctional Facility*: This correctional facility has a slight smoke risk but no fire risk. The buildings at the facility have low ignitability and are protected by a sprinkler system. The facility is rated low.

Areas of Concern (May or may not be High Occurrence Wildfire Areas)

■ *Natchez Trace Parkway*: Approximately 18.9 miles of the Natchez Trace Parkway cross the western side of Leake County. The national forestland is well maintained by the National Park Service. However, the parkway is a controlled access roadway, making it more difficult for the local fire departments to respond when called upon to back up the Park Service. The parkway is rated medium.

■ *Standing Pine and Red Water Indian Reservations*: The Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians has two reservations inside Leake County – Standing Pine, located along Highway 487 between Sebastopol and Highway 35, and Red Water, located north of Carthage. Neither of these reservations is located in a heavily wooded area and both are rated low risk.

High Occurrence Wildfire Areas

According to records maintained by the volunteer fire departments, Leake County has several areas that have had a high occurrence of wildfires during the last five years (2002-2007). One such area is the response area of the Carthage Volunteer Fire Department, especially outside the Carthage city limits. Two other high occurrence areas are the response areas of Ludlow and Sebastopol volunteer fire departments that fall within Leake County. Both of these departments are actually located in Scott County, but their coverage area extends into Leake County. These high occurrence wildfire areas are heavily wooded and have excessive debris that can cause wildfires.

Fuel Hazards

Leake County has several fuel hazards that make it more susceptible to wildfire. These include many heavily wooded areas, both on private and commercial forestland. Also, the presence of tree limbs, leaf litter and other debris in these areas make wildfires more likely. Finally, the spread of cogon grass, a highly flammable, invasive species, has further increased the fuel load in these wooded areas.

VI. Emergency Preparedness

Emergency preparedness for each of the county volunteer fire departments is continually reviewed and assessed by the Leake County Fire Service. This assessment involves factors such as equipment availability and age, public protection classification, and manpower. Mutual aid agreements exist amount all of the fire departments within the county, and many grants have been used over the years to obtain needed equipment.

Fire District and municipalities in the State of Mississippi receive a public protection classification through the Mississippi State Rating Bureau (MSRB). This classification is the basis for determining the fire insurance rating for each district. The Fire Districts within Leake County are listed below with the corresponding MSRB classification.

Mississippi State Rating Bureau Public Protection Classification List

District	Class
Barnes	9 or 10
Carthage	7
Edinburg	9 or 10
Lena	8 or 10
Madden	8 or 10
Marydell	9 or 10
Ofahoma	10
Reformation	9 or 10
Thomastown	10
Walnut Grove	8 or 10
Ludlow *	9 or 10
Sebastopol *	8, 9, or 10

* Stations are physically located in Scott County with response areas in Leake County.

In general, each station is well equipped and able to respond to the needs of the areas it serves. However, Steering Committee members did identify improvements that could be made to provide better service within the districts.

The Steering Committee identified manpower concerns. Recruiting and retaining the volunteers is an issue. New firefighters are often issued worn-out, old gear or have to purchase their own. It is recommended that grants be sought or fundraisers implemented to provide new gear as needed.

Additional recruitment techniques should also be implemented. One recruitment suggestion is for the creation and maintenance of an on-going recruitment program that identifies the current manpower needs as well as those over the next five years. Creating recruitment kits to keep on-hand for prospective candidates, as well as enlisting the local community through newspaper inserts and recruitment flyers placed at local restaurants and other businesses may be successful.

In addition to the MSRB Rating and manpower issues, equipment is an important factor in emergency preparedness. A current inventory of large equipment with description, age, and location is provided below. Currently, the departments utilize a variety of large firefighting equipment with no immediate needs. However, smaller firefighting equipment has been identified as an action item later in this plan. Small, rapid response brush trucks are needed to better fight wildland fires.

Leake County Fire District Equipment List

Department	Year	Make/Model	Type	Owner
Barnes	1998	E-1	Pumper 1000 gallon	County
	1973	GMC	Pumper 1000 gallon	County
	1988	Chevrolet ½ Ton 4-WD	Brush Truck 200 gallon	Forestry Commission
Carthage	1975	Ford FMC	Pumper	City of Carthage
	1987	Ford FMC	Pumper	City of Carthage
	1997	Freightliner	Rescue	City of Carthage
	1999	Ford F550	Rescue	City of Carthage
Edinburg	1998	E-1	Pumper 1000 gallon	County
	2003	Ford F550 4x4	Brush Truck 400 gallon	Department
Lena	2006	GMC	Pumper 1000 gallon	County
	1997	Ford	Pumper 1000 gallon	Department
	1988	Volvo	Tanker 3000 gallon	Department
Madden	1998	E-1	Pumper 1000 gallon	County
	1983	AMC (Military)	Tanker 2500 gallon	Forestry Commission
	1979	Ford E-100 Van	Rescue	Department

Marydell	2004	E-1	Pumper 1000 gallon	County
	1981	AMC (Military)	Rescue	Department
	2003	Ford F350	Brush Truck 300 gallon	County
Ofahoma	1998	E-1	Pumper 1000 gallon	County
	1978	MAC	Pumper 1000 gallon	County
Reformation	1998	E-1	Pumper 1000 gallon	County
	1978	F700	Pumper 750 gallon	Department
	1978	F700	Tanker 1500 gallon	Department
Thomastown	1998	E-1	Pumper 1000 gallon	County
	1983	MAC	Pumper 1000 gallon	County
Walnut Grove	1999	GMC	Pumper 1000 gallon	County
	1983	AMC (Military)	Pumper 1000 gallon	Department
Ludlow	1996	Pierce	Pumper 1000 gallon	County
	1986	Ford	Tanker 1500 gallon	Department
	2006	Pierce	Tanker 3000 gallon	Department
	2003	GMC	Rescue	Department
Sebastopol	1999	E-1	Pumper 1000 gallon	Department
	1984	Ford	Tanker 1000 gallon	Department
	1984	Ford	Tanker 1000 gallon	Department

VII. Mitigation Projects and Structure Ignitability Recommendations

Through the Community Risk Assessment several areas for improvement were identified. Mitigation projects for the at-risk areas may involve the removal or reduction in fuel load for some, a public awareness campaign for others, or a combination approach.

No specific treatment projects for Critical Infrastructure sites were identified or found to be necessary at this time. These sites are generally well maintained and have moderate to low ignitability potential.

The sites identified as Vulnerable Facilities involve the use or transport of ignitable or hazardous materials. There is an increased potential for wildfire at or near these sites due to the natural characteristics of these operations.

COUNTY

- Develop a homeowner education program
- Encourage developments to become Firewise USA Communities
- Implement a maintenance program to eradicate/control Cogon grass
- Ensure that road signs are easy to read so emergency responders can locate addresses quickly

LANDOWNERS

- Provide a clearing of at least 30 feet around structure for firefighting equipment access
- Remove “ladder fuels” that can link grasses to tree tops
- Prune trees so the lowest is between 6’ – 10’ from the ground
- Remove leaf clutter from roof and yard
- Mow regularly
- Remove dead and overhanging branches
- Store firewood away from the house
- Don’t keep combustible materials under decks or elevated porches
- Use construction materials that are fire-resistant or non-combustible when possible
- Ensure house numbers are clearly visible from the road so emergency responders can locate addresses quickly

VIII. Action Plan and Assessment Strategy

The action plan and assessment strategy portion of the County Wildfire Protection Plan serves to identify roles and responsibilities, determine funding needs, set timetables for carrying out identified activities, and measure the plan's effectiveness.

1. *Seek funding for purchase of Brush/Quick Attack Trucks*

Responsibility: Leake County Fire Service, Leake County Board of Supervisors, Volunteer Fire Departments

Funding: Potential grant opportunities

Timetable for Completion: Spring 2010

Expected Outcome: Improved firefighting capabilities, especially for wildland firefighting

Assessment Timetable: Summer 2010

2. *Seek funding for purchase of wildland firefighting equipment, including NFPA-approved wildland PPE, ATV's with water tanks and spray capability, additional fire rakes, flaps, and pumps, and folding portable water tanks*

Responsibility: Leake County Fire Service, Leake County Board of Supervisors, Volunteer Fire Departments

Funding: Potential grant opportunities

Timetable for Completion: Spring 2010

Expected Outcome: Improved firefighting capabilities, especially for wildland firefighting

Assessment Timetable: Summer 2010

3. *Seek funding to purchase additional communication equipment, including radios*

Responsibility: Leake County Fire Service, Leake County Board of Supervisors, Volunteer Fire Departments

Funding: Potential grant opportunities

Timetable for Completion: Spring 2010

Expected Outcome: Improved communication among firefighters and between firefighters and county dispatch during wildland fire calls

Assessment Timetable: Summer 2010

4. *Work with Mississippi Forestry Commission to provide wildland training for volunteer firefighters, including basic wildland firefighting techniques, wildland fire behavior, and wildland survival and safety skills*

Responsibility: Leake County Fire Service, Mississippi Forestry Commission

Funding: Mississippi Forestry Commission

Timetable for Completion: Summer 2010

Expected Outcome: Improved wildland firefighting capabilities and safety of firefighters

Assessment Timetable: Winter 2010

5. ***Develop strategies to recruit additional volunteer firefighters and to retain existing volunteer firefighters***

Responsibility: Leake County Fire Service, Volunteer Fire Departments
Funding: Volunteer Fire Departments, grants, Mississippi Forestry Commission
Timetable for Completion: 1-2 years
Expected Outcome: Increase the number of new volunteer fire fighters in the county, maintain the number of existing volunteer firefighters in the county
Assessment Timetable: Annual review of recruitment and retention numbers

6. ***Improve transportation system in forest system where possible to improve access to wooded areas***

Responsibility: Leake County Fire Service, Leake County Board of Supervisors, Mississippi Forestry Commission
Funding: Leake County Board of Supervisors, Volunteer Fire Departments, Mississippi Forestry Commission
Timetable for Completion: 1-2 years
Expected Outcome: Improved access to wooded areas by increasing the number of fire access lanes in the forest system
Assessment Timetable: Summer 2010

7. ***Seek funding to remove debris, including Hurricane Katrina-related debris, which can serve as fuel for forest fires***

Responsibility: Leake County Fire Service, Leake County Board of Supervisors, Mississippi Forestry Commission
Funding: Grants, Leake County Board of Supervisors, Mississippi Forestry Commission
Timetable for Completion: 1-2 years
Expected Outcome: Reduction in forest fires from debris fuel
Assessment Timetable: Summer 2010

8. ***Develop an accountability program for fire personnel***

Responsibility: Leake County Fire Service, Leake County Board of Supervisors
Funding: Possible grant funding
Timetable for Completion: Summer 2010
Expected Outcome: Improved safety on fire scenes
Assessment Timetable: Winter 2010

9. *Seek funding to install additional fireplugs, stand pipes, and dry hydrants in rural areas of the county*

Responsibility: Leake County Fire Service, Leake County Board of Supervisors, Rural Water Associations

Funding: Possible grant funding

Timetable for Completion: 2-5 years

Expected Outcome: More access to water to fight wildfires

Assessment Timetable: Ongoing

10. *Seek funding to identify locations of vegetation with high ignitability*

Responsibility: Leake County Fire Service, Leake County Board of Supervisors, Natural Resource Conservation Service

Funding: Possible grant funding

Timetable for Completion: 1-2 years

Expected Outcome: Location of vegetation with high ignitability so that plans can be formulated to eradicate/control this vegetation

Assessment Timetable: Summer 2010

IX. Potential Funding Sources

1. Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program
Website: www.firegrantsupport.com
Application Deadline: Spring 2009
Program Description: Funding for training, equipment, vehicles, firefighter health and safety program and operations
2. Fire Prevention and Safety (FP&S) Grant Program
Website: www.firegrantsupport.com
Application Deadline: Fall 2009
Program Description: Outreach to high risk target groups including children, seniors and firefighters. Monitor website for further information on eligible activities.
3. Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant Program
Website: www.firegrantsupport.com
Application Deadline: Summer 2009
Program Description: Funding for the hiring of fire personnel and incentives for volunteer recruitment and retention.
4. USDA Rural Development Community Facilities Grant Program
Website: www.rurdev.usda.gov
Application Deadline: Contact local USDA Representative
Program Description: Funding for assistance in developing an essential community facility. Funds can be used to construct, enlarge, or improve community facilities for health care, public safety and community and public safety.
5. Grants Office
Website: www.firegrants.info and www.grantsoffice.com
Program Description: Provides info, tool and tips to help fire departments be more successful at obtaining funds from the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program.
6. Hazard Mitigation
Website: www.mitigationms.org
Application Deadline: Varies – contact Mississippi Emergency Management Agency
Program Description: Provides grant funds for hazard mitigation projects, including emergency generators, warning sirens and mitigation planning.
7. Grants Office:
Website: www.mississippi.org
Application Deadline: Ongoing
Program Description: Funding assistance for fire protection. Funds can be used to purchase fire trucks and brush trucks.

8. Grants Office: USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) –
Jasper County Soil Conservation Office
- Website: www.usda.gov/nrcs
- Application Deadline: Ongoing
- Program Description: Funding assistance to help residents eradicate cogon grass.

X. References:

Data sources utilized in preparation of this plan include:

Mississippi Forestry Commission

U.S. Bureau of the Census

Leake County Hazard Mitigation Plan prepared by East Central Planning and Development District

East Central Planning and Development District Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) 2007

Firewise, Around Your Home Brochure, www.firewise.org

USDA Forest Service, Preparing a Community Wildfire Protection Plan, March 2004

USDA Forest Service, Forest Statistics for Mississippi Counties – 1994

Leake County Development Association, www.leakeida.com

Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce, “Bureau of Plan Industry”,
www.mdac.state.ms.us/n_library/departments/bpi/bpi_pesticide.html

XI. Project Contact Information:

East Central Planning and Development District
Post Office Box 499
280 Commercial Drive
Newton, Mississippi 39345
601-683-2007

Mississippi Association of Planning and Development Districts
Post Office Box 4935
Jackson, MS 39216
601-981-1511

Leake County Emergency Management Agency
123 North Pearl Street
Carthage, MS 39051

Steering Committee

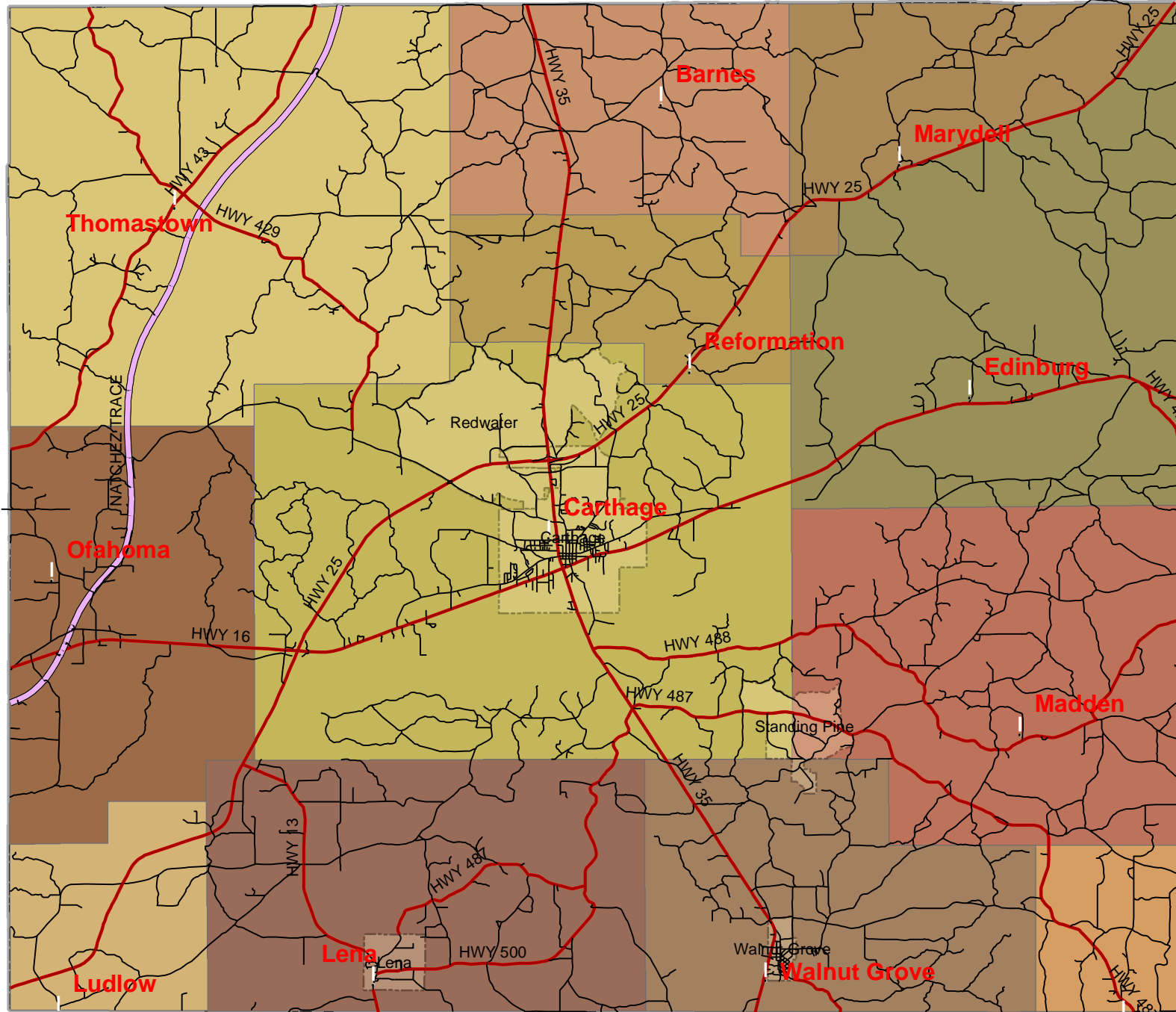
Tommy Malone, Emergency Management Director, Leake County
Jeff Rhinewalt, Fire Chief, Lena Volunteer Fire Department
Jeff Graham, Edinburg Volunteer Fire Department
Evelyn Graham, Edinburg Volunteer Fire Department
Tommy Jones, Fire Chief, Madden Volunteer Fire Department
Bettie Jean Franklin, Madden Volunteer Fire Department
Danny McMurry, Carthage Volunteer Fire Department
Greg Mullen, Fire Chief, Ofahoma Volunteer Fire Department
Shane Dees, Thomastown Volunteer Fire Department
Dale Johnson, Fire Chief, Marydell Volunteer Fire Department
Horace Johnson, Fire Chief, Reformation Volunteer Fire Department
Tommy Adams, Thomastown Volunteer Fire Department
David Dumas, Fire Chief, Walnut Grove Volunteer Fire Department

XII. Maps

See attached maps

Leake County, MS County Wildfire Protection Plan

Fire Response Areas

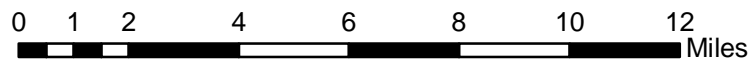


Legend

- VFD Stations
- Roads & Streets
- Highways
- Natchez Trace
- - - Census Place
- ▭ County Boundary

Response Areas

- Barnes
- Carthage
- Edinburg
- Lena
- Ludlow
- Madden
- Marydell
- Ofahoma
- Reformation
- Sebastopol
- Thomastown
- Walnut Grove

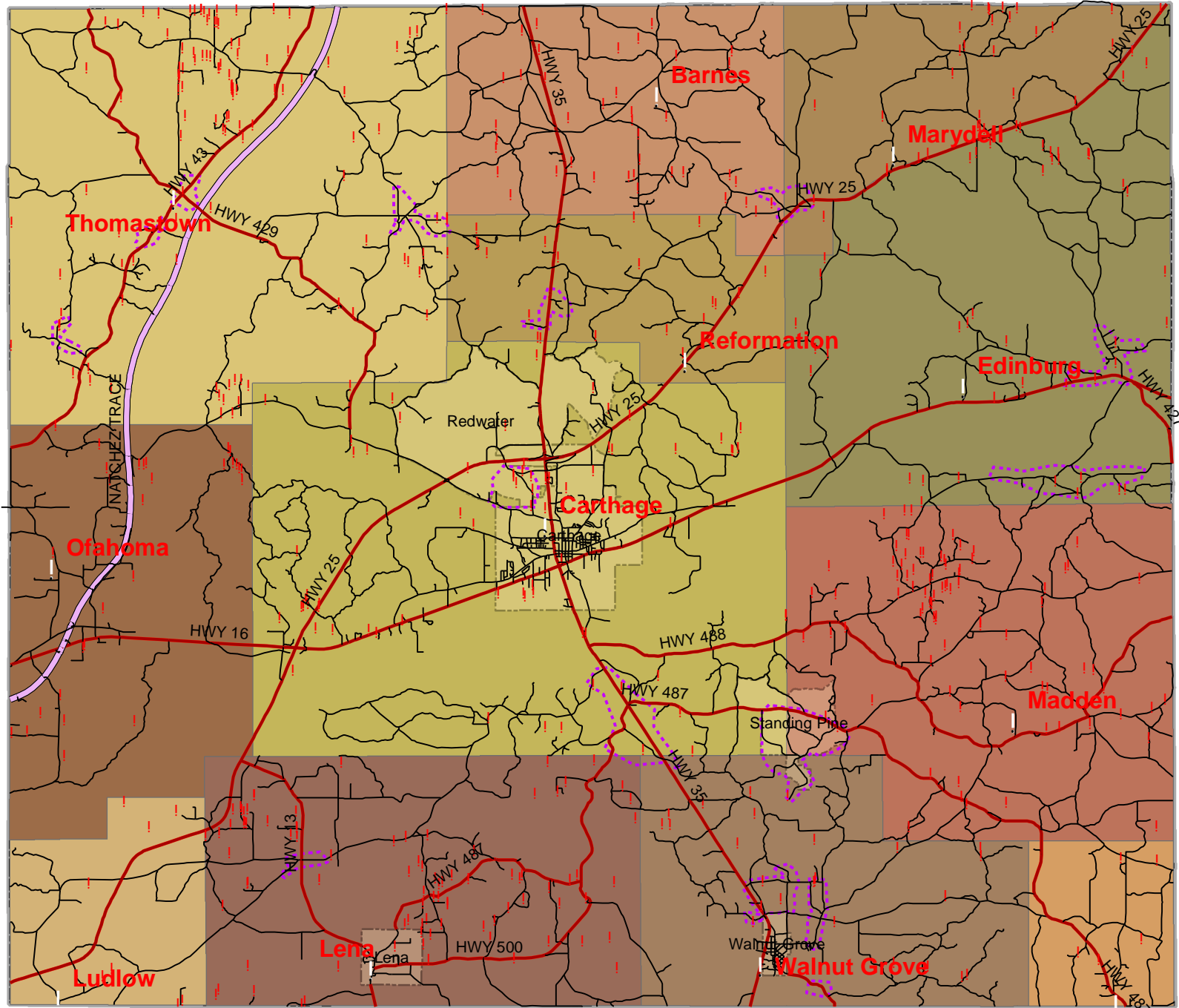


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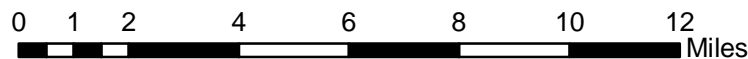
Sebastopol
Prepared by: ECPDD

Leake County, MS County Wildfire Protection Plan

Wildfires by Response Areas



Legend	
!	Fire FY's 2002-2007
.	VFD Stations
—	Roads & Streets
—	Highways
—	Natchez Trace
⋯	Wildland Urban Interface
⊞	Census Place
⊞	County Boundary
Response Areas	
■	Barnes
■	Carthage
■	Edinburg
■	Lena
■	Ludlow
■	Madden
■	Marydell
■	Ofahoma
■	Reformation
■	Sebastopol
■	Thomastown
■	Walnut Grove

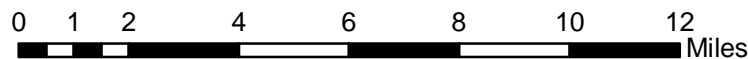
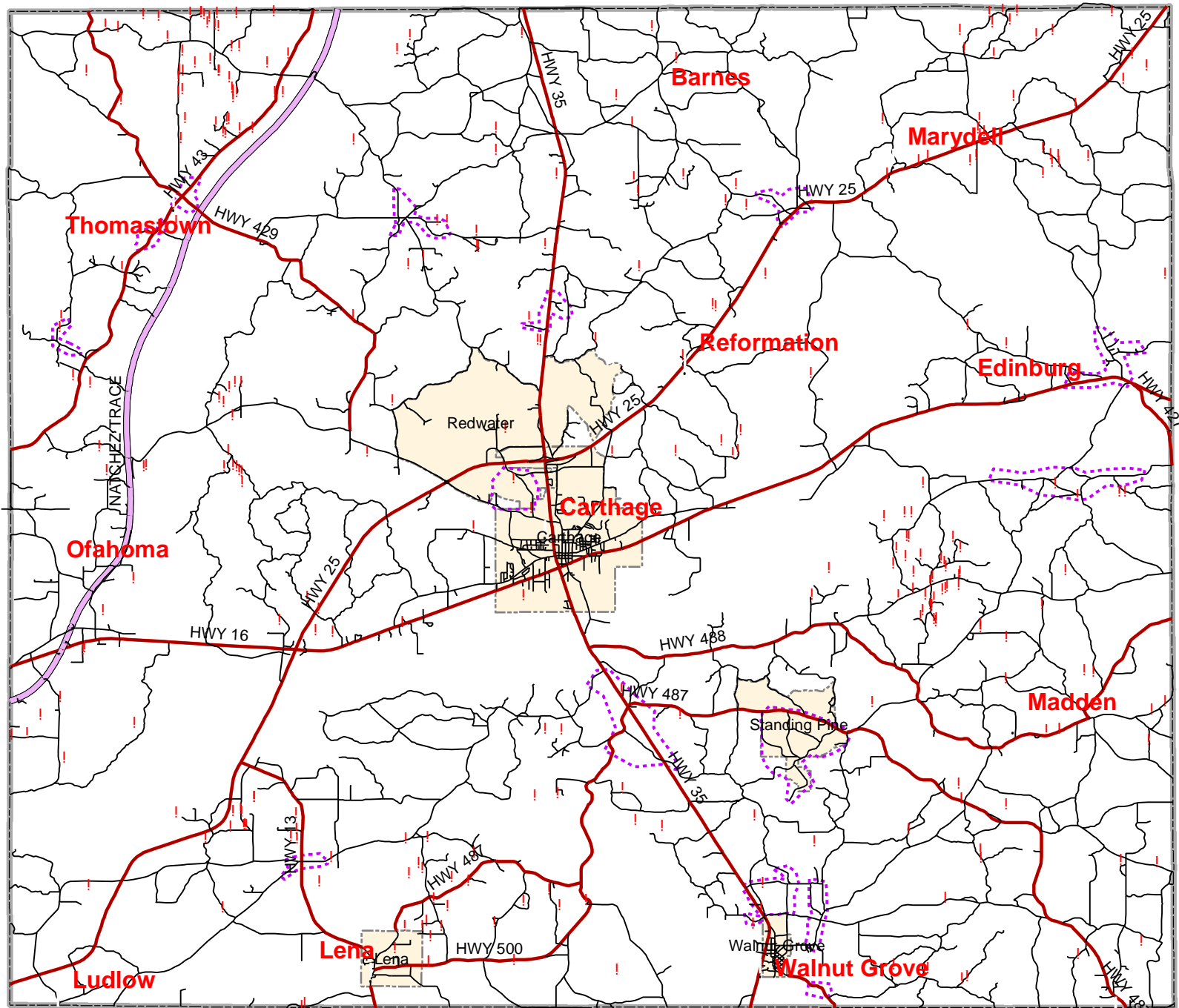


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*Arson Fires
FY's 2002-2007*



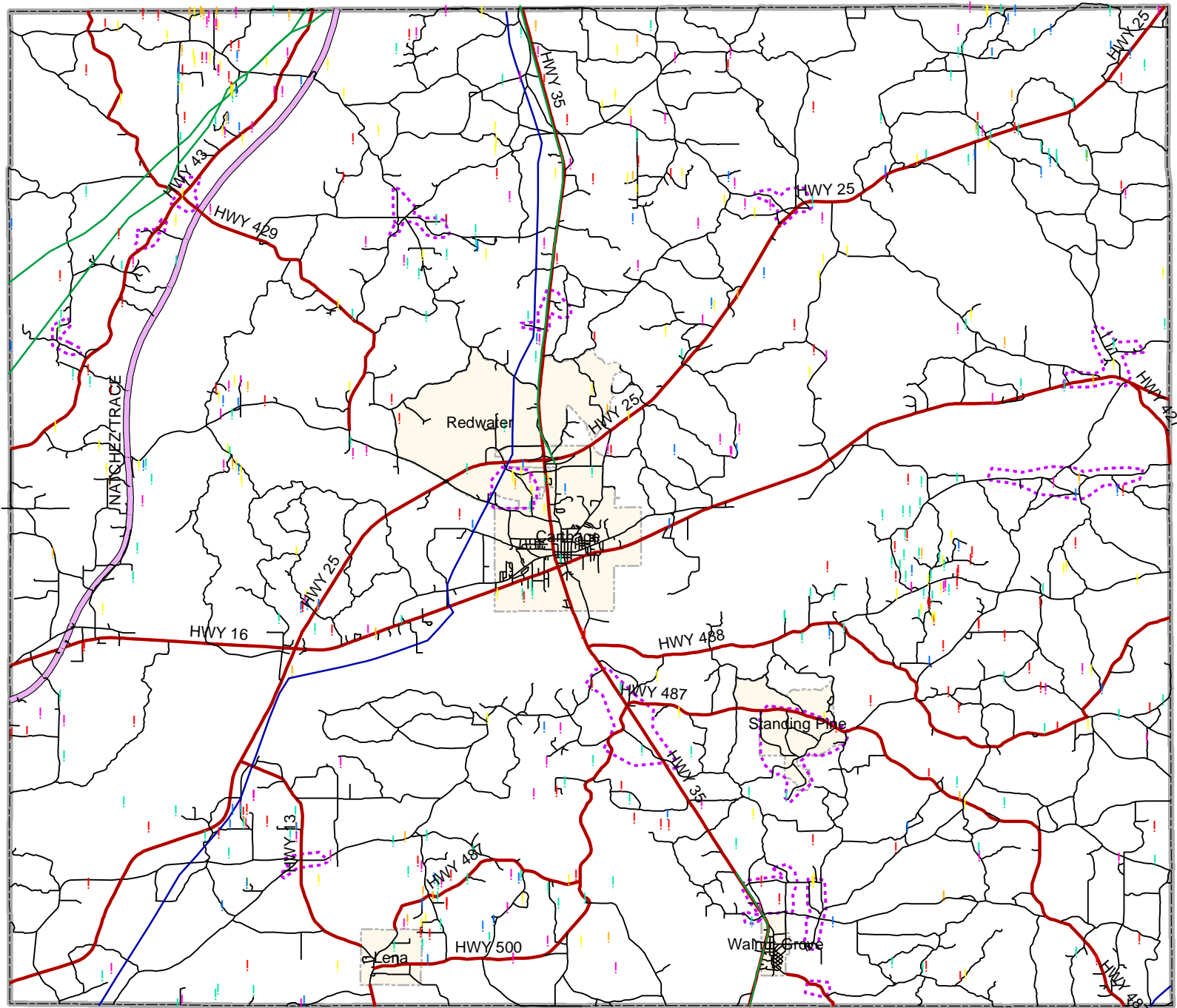
4

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Legend	
!	Arson Incident
.	VFD Stations
—	Roads & Streets
—	Highways
—	Natchez Trace
- - -	Wildland Urban Interface
■	Census Place
□	County Boundary

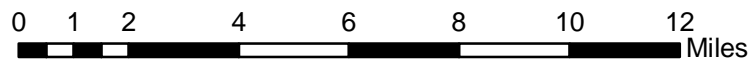
Leake County, MS County Wildfire Protection Plan

**Fire Data
by MFC FY's
2002-2007**



Legend

- Electric Transmission Lines
- Oil or Gas Pipelines
- Wildland Urban Interface
- MFC_FY Fires**
- | 2002
- | 2003
- | 2004
- | 2005
- | 2006
- | 2007
- Roads & Streets
- Highways
- Natchez Trace
- Census Place
- County Boundary

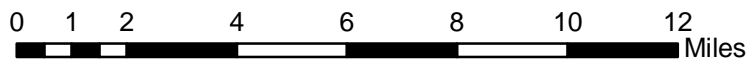
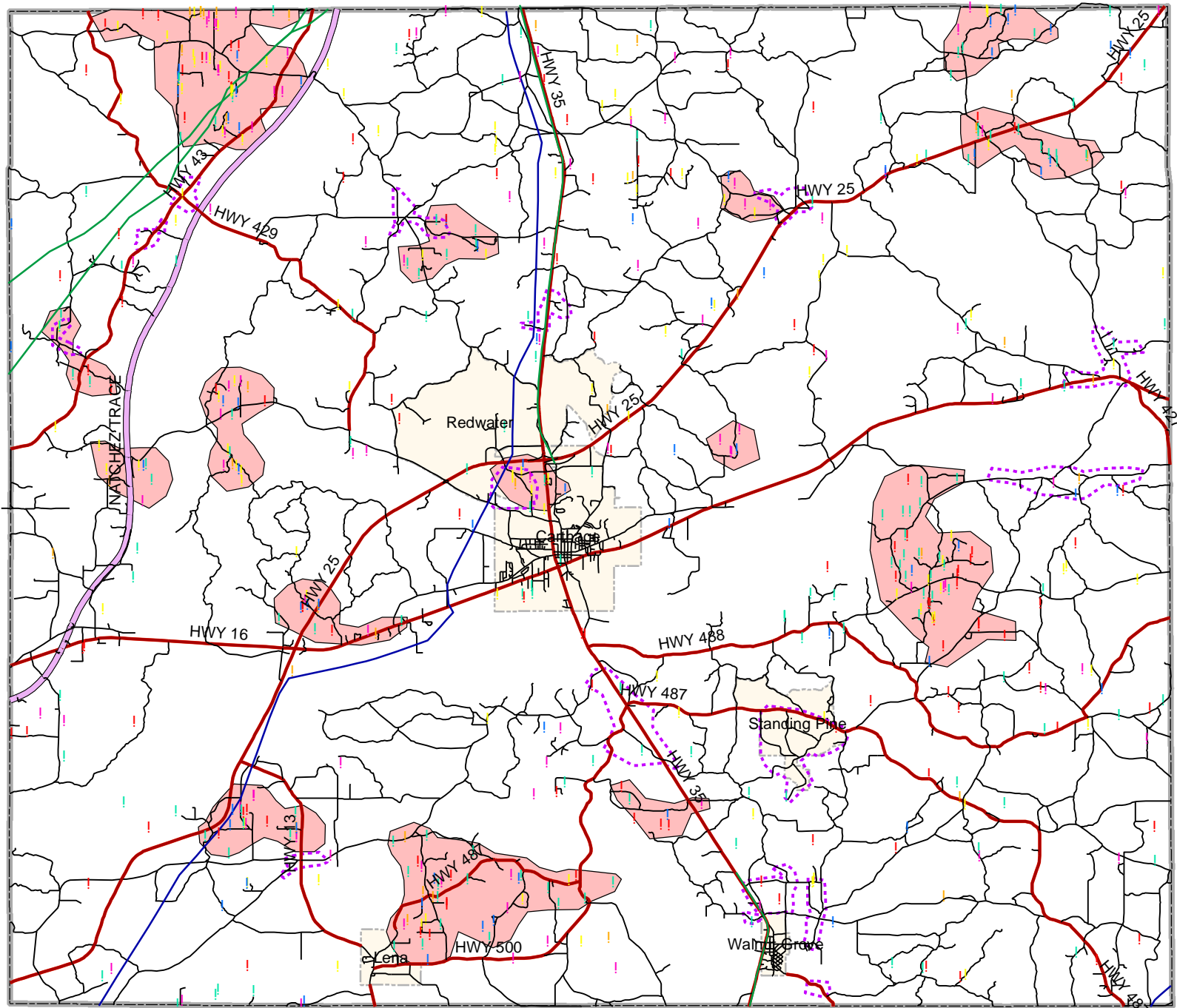


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High Occurrence Wildfire Areas



4

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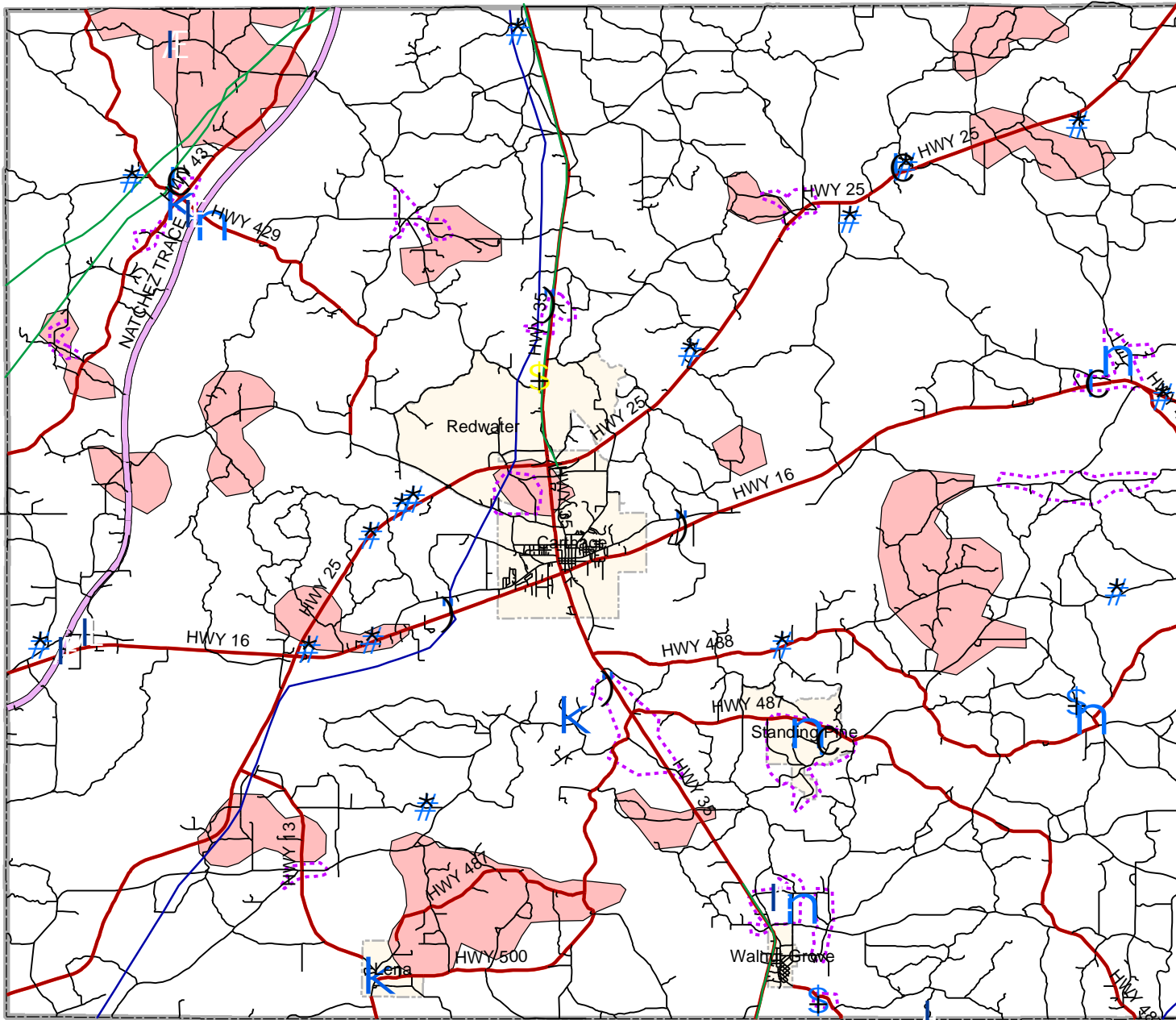
Legend

- Electric Transmission Lines
- Oil or Gas Pipelines
- Wildland Urban Interface
- Fire Incident**
- 2002
- 2003
- 2004
- 2005
- 2006
- 2007
- Roads & Streets
- Highways
- Natchez Trace
- Census Place
- County Boundary
- High Fire Occurrence

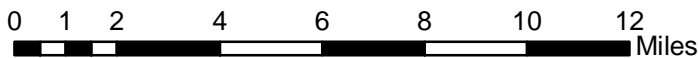
Leake County, MS County Wildfire Protection Plan

Risk Assessment Ratings

Items are color coded
as to Risk Level
Blue = Low
Yellow = Medium
Green = Medium High
Red = High

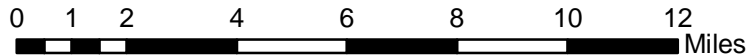
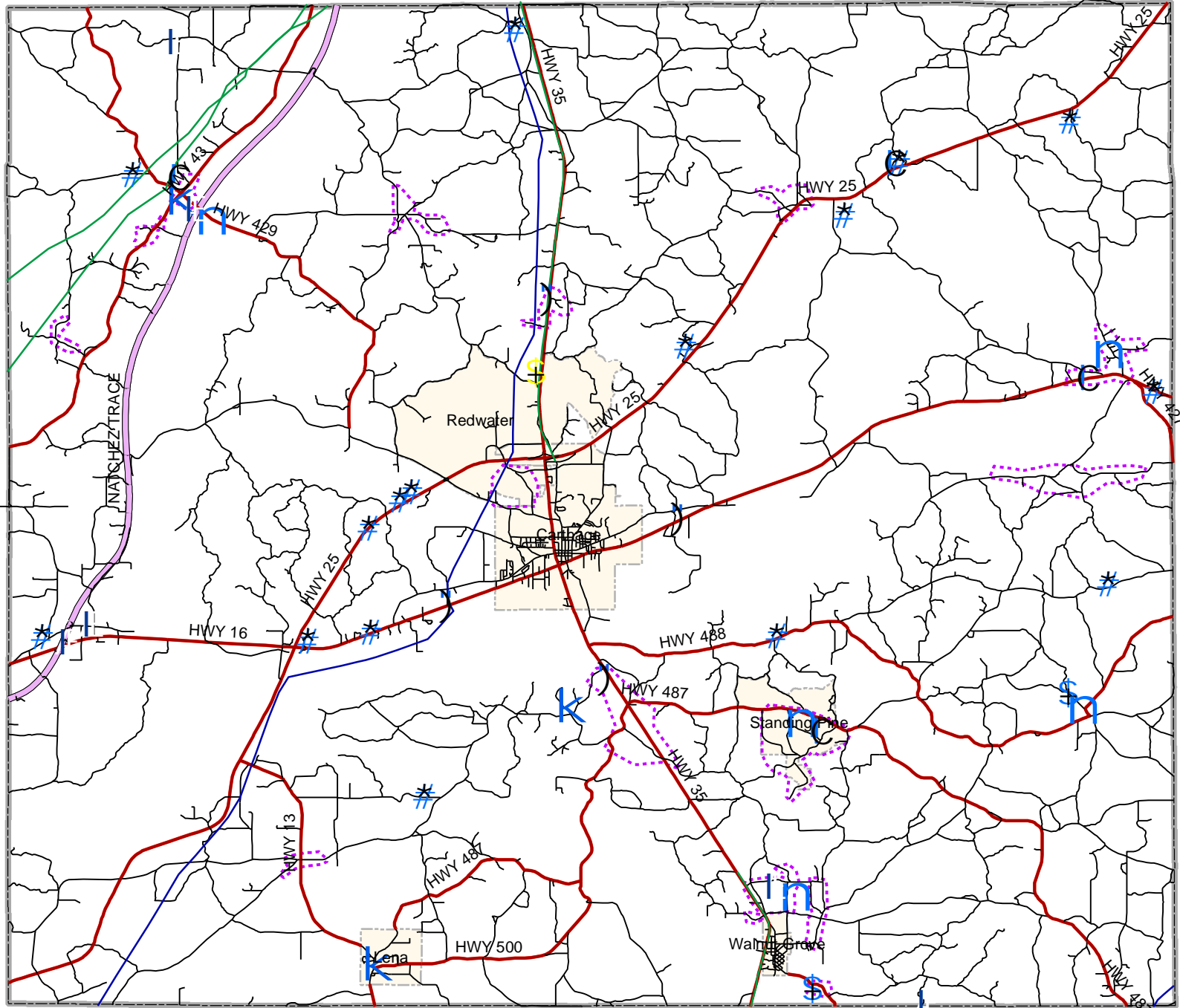


Legend	
	Wildland Urban Interface
	Electric Transmission Lines
	Oil or Gas Pipelines
	Employer
	Employer
	Park
	School
	Utility
	Cellular Tower
	Power Substation
	Communication Repeaters
	Roads & Streets
	Highways
	Natchez Trace
	High Fire Occurrence
	Census Place
	County Boundary



Leake County, MS County Wildfire Protection Plan

Base Map



4

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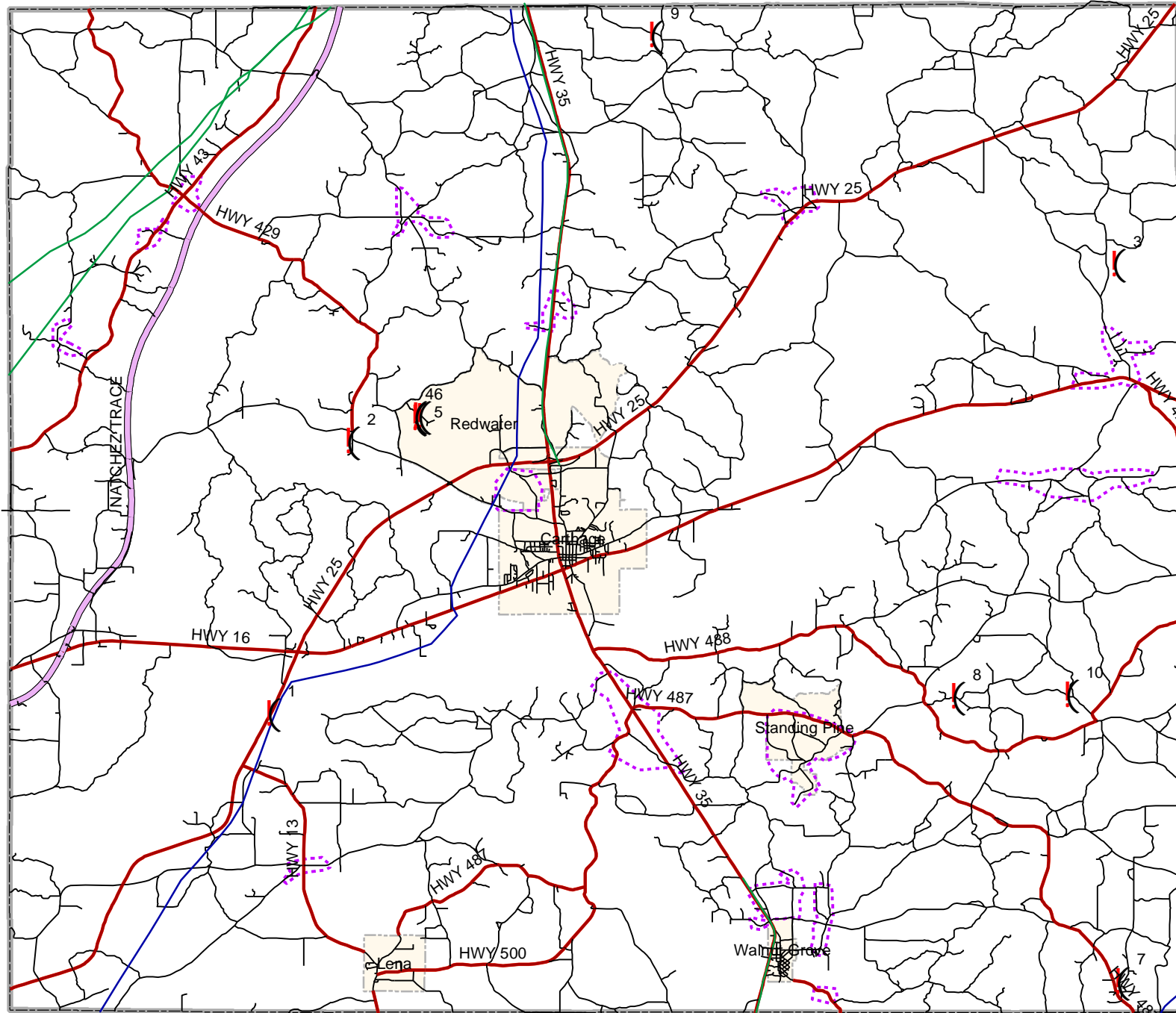
Legend

- Electric Transmission Lines
- Oil or Gas Pipelines
- Roads & Streets
- Highways
- Natchez Trace
- Wildland Urban Interface
- Census Place
- County Boundary
- Employer
- Employer
- Park
- School
- Utility
- Cellular Tower
- Power Substation
- Communication Repeater

Leake County, MS County Wildfire Protection Plan

Cogon Grass Locations

Cogon Locations
provided by
Leake Co. NRCS



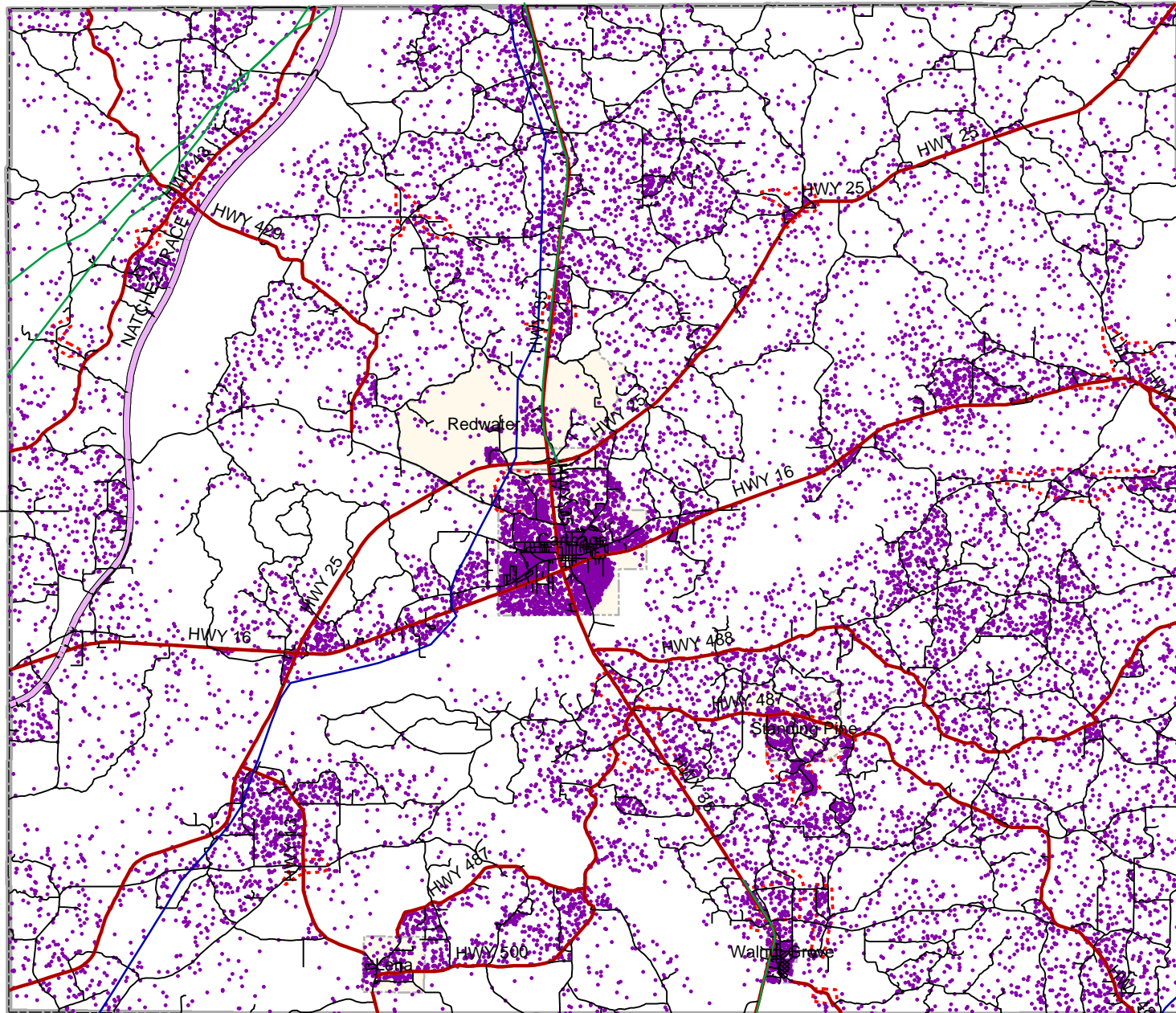
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Legend

- Cogon Grass Locations
- Wildland Urban Interface
- Electric Transmission Lines
- Oil or Gas Pipelines
- Roads & Streets
- Highways
- Natchez Trace
- Census Place
- County Boundary

Leake County, MS County Wildfire Protection Plan



0 1 2 4 6 8 10 12
Miles

4

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